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jurisprudence; and Browning is the greater poet for the contact. It is surely with a sense of this double aspect of his work that, recounting his conversion of Book into poem, he asks:

Lovers of dead truth, did ye fare the worse?
Lovers of live truth, found ye false my tale?

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MULIER EST HOMINIS CONFUSIO

In his elaborate reply to Dame Pertelote, who had argued that dreams are purely the result of disordered humors, Chauntecleer has his authorities well in hand. But his sharpest shaft is the one with which he concludes the discussion:

Mulier est hominis confusio.

This phrase is found, as Tyrwhitt long ago pointed out, in a definition of woman which is incorporated in the *Speculum Historiale* (Lib. XI. cap. 71).¹

Quid est mulier. Hominis confusio. insaturabilis bestia. continua sollicitudo. indesinens pugna. viri continentis naufragium. humanum mancipium.

This definition of woman occurs in a long series of questions and answers which Vincent de Beauvais borrows, as he tells us, from the *Gesta Secundi Philosophi*. This treatise, which more frequently appears with the title, *Altercatio Hadriani Augusti et Secundi philosophi*, was widely known in the Middle Ages.² In a number

¹ I cite the text from the edition of Antonius Koburger, Nuremberg, 1483. In this edition the general Table of Contents stands as 'Liber I.' Later editions ignore the Table of Contents in numbering the several Books. In these, therefore, our passage will be found in Lib. X, cap. 71.

² For references to numerous texts of this treatise see R. Reicke, *Philologus*, XVIII, 525-527. Reicke prints the complete text according to a Königsberg MS. of the 13th or 14th centuries (pp. 527-534). For a collation of a 14th century MS. at Maihingen see G. Schepps, *Philologus*, XXXVII, 562-567. The text of three 15th century MSS. at Munich is printed by Johannes Bachmann, *Philologus*, XLVI, 388-399. Bachmann also discusses (pp. 385-387) the view advanced by E. Revillout that the *Bios Σεκούνδου φιλοσόφου* owes its origin in turn to a version in some Oriental language.

of texts the name of Epictetus has displaced that of Secundus; but the Greek *Bíos Σεκούνδου φιλοσόφου*, which is recognized as the source of the Latin versions, makes it certain that Secundus was the original reading.

The story of Secundus and his colloquy with Hadrian (which includes the definition of woman) was taken over from the *Altercatio* by many other medieval compilers besides Vincent de Beauvais—among them Walter Burley of Oxford in his *Liber de vita et moribus philosophorum*,³ the interpolator of Roger de Hoveden's Chronicle,⁴ and the author of the *Dialogus Creaturarum*.⁵

Moreover the 'Mulier' passage is frequently found detached from its context as an isolated bit of monastic wisdom. That this satirical characterization of woman enjoyed wide circulation is clear from its occurrence in this detached form in the following manuscripts at Oxford. No doubt the list could be vastly extended by an examination of manuscripts in other libraries.

BODLEIAN LIBRARY

MS. Bodley 57 (written about 1300).

[fol. 20^b]. Proprietates mulieris.

Quid est mulier? Humana confusio. Insatiabilis bestia. continua sollicitudo. indesinens pugna. Cotidianum dampnum. domus tempestatis. castitatis impedimentum. incontinentis uiri naufragium. adulterij uas. preciosum prelium. animal pessimum. pondus grauissimum. aspis insanabilis. humanum mancipium.

MS. Wood 20 (xv cent.).

[fol. 37^a]. Quid est mulier? hominis confusio. Insaciabilis bestia. continuata sollicitudo. Indeficiens pugna.⁶ da[m]p-

which is represented by the surviving texts in Arabic, Ethiopic, and Syriac. Since the article in *Philologus* Bachmann has published a monograph on Secundus (*Die Philosophie des Neupythagoreers Secundus*, Berlin, 1888) with an Appendix (Anhang III) containing the Latin text of the *Altercatio*. This monograph, I regret to say, I have not seen; for the reference to it I am indebted to Walther Suchier, *L'Enfant Sage* (Gesellschaft für romanische Lit., Bd. xxiv), p. 8.

³ Conveniently accessible in the modern edition by Hermann Knust (Litterarischer Verein in Stuttgart, No. 177), Tübingen, 1886. The Secundus material stands on pp. 372-386.

⁴ *Chronica Mag. Rogeri de Houedone*, ed. Wm. Stubbs, Rolls Ser., iv, 154.

⁵ For 'Mulier' see 'Dialogus 121' (ed. Graesse, p. 276).

⁶ The scribe evidently 'overhopped' at this point.

num. domus tempestatis. castitatis impedimentum. viri et continencie Naufragium. vas adulterij. preciosum prelium. animal pessimum. pondus grauissimum. aspis insanabilis. Humanum mancipium.

MS. Digby 196 (xv cent.).

[fol. 159^b]. Quid est mulier? hominis confusio. Insaciabilis bestia. continua sollicitudo. Indeficiens pugna. cotidianum dampnum. domus tempestatis. solacionis impedimentum. viri continentis naufragium. Adulterij vas. perniciosum prelium. pondus grauissimum. Aspes insanabilis. humanum mancipium. Animal pessimum.

Comendacio mulieris.

OXFORD COLLEGES

St. John's. Coll. MS. 147 (xv cent.).⁷

[fol. 264^b]. Quid est Mulier? Hominis confusio. Insaturabilis bestia. Continua sollicitudo. Indeficiens Pungna. Cotidianum dampnum. Domum tempestatis uel temptacionis. Salutis impedimentum. Viri incontinentis naufragium. Adulterij uas. Discerpens prelium. Animal Pessimum. Pondus grauissimum. Aspis insanabilis. Humanum Mancipium.

Secundus Philosophum.

Trinity Coll. MS. 71 (xv cent.).

[fol. 1^b]. Quid est Mulier quod Chateyne Cosma.

Mulier est hominis confusio / Insaturabilis bestia / Pungna frequens. dampnum cotidianum ⁶ naufragium / Vacuacio bur-sarum / diminutio munerum / doctrine impedimentum. perturbacio vnorum longabardorum ⁸ / Infamia generosorum / Anime corruptela / Honestatis infamia / Animal pessimum. tempestas domus. cotidianum bellum / dulce venenum / languor suavis / chatena cordis / inexpugnabile cal[lum].⁹ Amica diaboli / capud peccati / expulsio paradisi / pondus grauissimum cuius []⁹ principium.

I am unable to identify "Chateyne Cosma," who is cited as the author of the Trinity College version, but he evidently amused himself by freely altering and expanding the definition. The phrase "*dulce venenum*," one of his additions, occurs in a diatribe

⁷ This book was the property of ——— Grove, monk of Westminster, and this passage is written in his hand.

⁸ Above this word the scribe has written *religiosorum*.

⁹ MS. defective through the tearing away of a corner of the leaf.

on woman in the poem '*De Contemptu Mundi*' by Bernardus Morlanensis.¹⁰

With the exception of the Trinity College version, however, these Oxford texts agree very closely with those printed by Reicke and Bachmann. In one or two particulars the Oxford readings are distinctly preferable: e. g. '*castitatis impedimentum*' instead of '*sollicitudinis impedimentum*,' and '*aspis insanabilis*' instead of '*aspis insaciabilis*.'

Whatever his exact source, this was essentially the definition of woman which Chaucer had in mind when he made Chauntecleer conclude his discussion by repeating with solemn emphasis:

Mulier est hominis confusio.

This is the phrase, it should be noted, with which the definition invariably begins. This observation gives even sharper edge to Chauntecleer's sarcasm, for the citation of this opening phrase was bound to suggest the context as well. "You know the rest," Chaucer says in effect to his readers; and the well-informed reader would easily recall the series of items in the misogynic diatribe, in which '*Hominis confusio*' was one of the mildest phrases. The recollection of the definition as a whole must have broadened the intelligent reader's smile at the translation which Chauntecleer vouchsafed to the simple Pertelote:

Womman is mannes ioye and al his blis.

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REVIEWS

Petite syntaxe de l'ancien français, par LUCIEN FOULET. Paris: Champion, 1919. x + 282 pp. (Les Classiques français du Moyen Âge, 21.)

It is not a simple problem to present in the compass of a book limited in size by its inclusion in this series a comprehensive view of even the elements of Old-French syntax. Manifestly some for-

¹⁰ *Anglo-Lat. Satirical Poets of the XII cent.*, ed. T. Wright, Rolls Ser., II, 57.